

VLR- 6/17/98
NRHP- (PENDING)

NPS Form 10-900
(Rev. 10-90)

OMB No. 1024-0018

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES REGISTRATION FORM

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form (National Register Bulletin 16A). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the information requested. If any item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions. Place additional entries and narrative items on continuation sheets (NPS Form 10-900a). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer, to complete all items.

1. Name of Property

historic name: Mount Calvary Lutheran Church

other name/site number: Gomer's Church, Comber's Church, Hoxbiehl Church, Hawksbill Church

DHR File No. 69-0038

2. Location

street & number: SR 670 approximately 1/4 mile northeast of intersection with SR 689

not for publication: NA

city/town: Luray

vicinity: X

state: VA county: Page code: 139 zip code: 22835

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1986, as amended, I hereby certify that this X nomination request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property X meets does not meet the National Register Criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant nationally statewide X locally. (See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

McCauley Alison

July 13, '98

Signature of certifying official Date

Virginia Department of Historic Resources

State or Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property X meets does not meet the National Register criteria. (See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Signature of commenting or other official

Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

4. National Park Service Certification

I, hereby certify that this property is:

 other (explain):

 entered in the National Register

 See continuation sheet.

 determined eligible for the

National Register

 See continuation sheet.

 determined not eligible for the National Register

 removed from the National Register

Signature of Keeper

Date of Action

**U. S. Department of the Interior
National Park Service**

Mount Calvary Lutheran Church
Page County, Virginia

5. Classification

Ownership of Property (Check as many boxes as apply)

☒ private
☐ public-local
☐ public-State
☐ public-Federal

Category of Property (Check only one box)

 X building(s)
 district
 site
 structure
 object

Number of Resources within Property

Contributing	Noncontributing	
<u>1</u>	<u>0</u>	buildings
<u>1</u>	<u>0</u>	sites
<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	structures
<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	objects
<u>2</u>	<u>0</u>	Total

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register: 0

Name of related multiple property listing: NA

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions (Enter categories from instructions)[illegible]

Current Functions (Enter categories from instructions)

[illegible]

U. S. Department of the Interior
National Park Service

Mount Calvary Lutheran Church
Page County, Virginia

7. Description

Architectural Classification (Enter categories from instructions)Early Republic; Federal

Materials (Enter categories from instructions)foundation brickroof metalwalls brick

other

Narrative Description (Describe the historic and current condition of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria (Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing)

- ☒ **A** Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
- ☐ **B** Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- ☒ **C** Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
- ☐ **D** Property has yielded, or is likely to yield information important in prehistory or history.

Criteria Considerations (Mark "X" in all the boxes that apply.)

- ☒ **A** owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.
- ☐ **B** removed from its original location.
- ☐ **C** a birthplace or a grave.
- ☒ **D** a cemetery.
- ☐ **E** a reconstructed building, object or structure.
- ☐ **F** a commemorative property.
- ☐ **G** less than 50 years of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years.

Areas of Significance (Enter categories from instructions)Ethnic Heritage: European - German;Exploration /Settlement; Architecture**Period of Significance** 1765-1848

Significant Dates : 17651848

Significant Person (Complete if Criterion B is marked above)**Cultural Affiliation**

Mount Calvary Lutheran Church
Page County, Virginia

Architect/Builder Unknown

Narrative Statement of Significance (Explain the significance of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

9. Major Bibliographical References

Bibliography

(Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form on one or more continuation sheets.)

Previous documentation on file (NPS)

☐ preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested.

☐ previously listed in the National Register

☐ previously determined eligible by the National Register

☐ designated a National Historic Landmark

☐ recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey #

☐ recorded by Historic American Engineering Record #

Primary Location of Additional Data

☒ State Historic Preservation Office

☐ Other State agency

☐ Federal agency

☐ Local government

☐ University

☒ Other

Specific Repository: Page County Library; Stony Man Lutheran Parish

9. Geographic Data

Acreage of Property: 4 (Approximately)

UTM References: Zone Easting Northing Zone Easting Northing

A 17 7243000 42786000 B

C D

☒ See Continuation Sheet

Verbal Boundary Description (Describe the boundaries of the property on a continuation sheet.)

Boundary Justification (Explain why the boundaries were selected on a continuation sheet.)

11. Form Prepared By

Name/Title: Thomas Tyler Potterfield Jr. - Volunteer Architectural Historian

Organization: Stony Man Lutheran Parish Date: 5-15-98

Street & Number: 2410 Rosewood Avenue Telephone: 804-358-1061

City or Town: Richmond State: VA ZIP: 23220

Mount Calvary Lutheran Church
Page County, Virginia

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

Continuation Sheets

Maps

A USGS map (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.

A sketch map for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources.

Photographs

Representative black and white photographs of the property.

Additional items (Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items)

Property Owner

(Complete this item at the request of the SHPO or FPO.)

name Mount Calvary Lutheran Trustees

street & number 10 Lewis Street telephone _____

city or town Luray state va zip code 22835

Paperwork Reduction Act Statement: This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C. 470 et seq.).

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18.1 hours per response including the time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Chief, Administrative Services Division, National Park Service, P.O. Box 37127, Washington, DC 20013-7127; and the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reductions Project (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20503.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Mount Calvary Lutheran Church
Page County, Virginia

Section 7 Page 1

Description

Mount Calvary Lutheran Church is located in the Stony Man area of Page County, Virginia. The Church is situated on a knoll at the foot of the Blue Ridge Mountains, at the end of a long dirt access road. The building is a well-preserved and pristine mid-nineteenth-century church building. It has had no additions and virtually no interior or exterior alterations since it was constructed in 1848.

At the southwestern portion of the church property is a small graveyard. Some of the graves have modest stones and there are unmarked graves. The graveyard has no fencing or formal boundaries.

The Mount Calvary building is situated on the eastern portion of the church property. The building is a slightly rectangular two-story structure with a gable roof. The building footprint dimensions are roughly 34' x 40'. The ridge of the roof follows the length of the building from east to west. The building has a standing-seam metal roof with decorative snow birds. The building roof has slightly overhanging eaves with hung half-round gutters. The building is constructed of brick laid in American bond, with a row of headers for every five rows of stretchers. The brickwork is of high quality and the bricks appear to have been locally kilned. A brick water table surrounds the building. Nine-over-six windows are used on the first-floor and six-over-six windows on the second floor. Original wooden shutters cover the first-floor windows.

The southern elevation of the building is the primary facade. It consists of three symmetrical bays. The first floor has a central window flanked by two double doors. Three windows are on the second floor above. The northern elevation of the building is largely devoid of openings, with only two windows on the first floor. The east and west elevations each have two symmetrical bays, with two windows on each floor. In the gable of the western elevation is a small datestone with the date 1848. The use of the datestone is consistent with a nearby church building from the same era, Grace Lutheran Church, which was built as a German Reformed Church in 1835.

The interior arrangement has the unusual feature of being oriented on the interior to the long side of the rectangle, instead of the shorter ends. This arrangement is similar to the early meetinghouses in the Shenandoah Valley and northern Virginia of dissenting denominations. In this case the building type is adapted to the needs of liturgical worship with an altar platform on the northern side of the interior. The two entrances may have served as men's and women's entrances. More probably they simply provided access to the two side aisles. On the first floor there are seven main rows of pews, and three rows of pews placed at a right angle to those. A raised platform against the north wall supports the pulpit. A communion table is placed in front of the platform. Two Champion model # 134 stoves are situated at the terminus of each of the aisles. It is speculated by Gaylon Waters of Luray, that originally the building had two stoves of local manufacture where the Champion stoves are now situated. A circa 1890 pump organ is located to the left hand side of the platform. Throughout the structure are flared window cases that enhance the admittance of natural light into the interior.

A large gallery extends around three sides of the interior. The gallery structure is supported by simple columns of the Tuscan order. Above the columns there is a system of panels and balusters. The second and third rows of gallery pews are raised on platforms one behind the other. Two small stairs at the east and west ends of the building

**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

**Mount Calvary Lutheran Church
Page County, Virginia**

Section 7 Page 2

provide access to the gallery. Throughout the building a high degree of craftsmanship is shown in the joinery.

Nearly all of the interior woodwork is finished with red mahogany stain. According to Mary Jane Goode, who grew up as a member of Mount Calvary Church, the plaster walls have been painted white as long as she can remember. However, an inspection of the plaster walls indicates evidence of a light blue paint. Several of the gallery pews are painted this same blue color. This suggests that originally all of the woodwork and plaster was painted blue.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Mount Calvary Lutheran Church
Page County, Virginia

Section 8 Page 3

Statement of Significance

Mount Calvary Lutheran Church is eligible for listing in the National Register under Criterion A, because of its association with the early German settlement of Page County. As early as 1765 an earlier church on the site served as the center of religious and community life amongst the Massanutten German community. The current building is a pristine example of religious architecture built in 1848, with important examples of craftsmanship, decorative treatments, and other characteristics associated with meetinghouse architecture of the period. It is therefore eligible for listing under Criterion C.

Mount Calvary Lutheran Church can trace its origins back to the first German settlers in the Page Valley area. In 1726 Adam Mueller led a group of families to the vicinity of present-day Luray. This early group of Germans from Pennsylvania were of the Mennonite, Lutheran, and Reformed denominations. It was known as the Massanutten settlement and is considered to be the first group of German settlers to locate in the Shenandoah Valley area.

It appears that the Massanutten Lutherans managed with difficulty to retain their denominational identity. A group of Moravians in the 1740s visited the community and noted the presence of Lutherans and German Reformed in the area. The Moravians found them disorganized and noted that "nearly all religious earnestness and zeal is extinguished among them." No record is known of any formal Lutheran organization during this period. The early Lutherans in Page County were simply referred to in early records as the Lutherans living in the Massanutten Settlement.

John Caspar Stoever, George Samuel Klug, and Johannes Schwarbach, three early pastors of Hebron Church in present-day Madison County, are credited with being the first pastors to serve the Massanutten Lutherans. At the time the Hebron pastors were virtually the only Lutheran clergy in the Virginia colony and ministered to the needs of a number of Shenandoah Valley congregations. These ministers came to the Massanutten Lutherans only a few times a year to conduct baptisms, and perform marriages. A communion chalice from Mount Calvary Church dated 1727 suggests that communion was provided by the Hebron pastors as well. No documentation has been found of a house of worship or a particular location for services.

Over time the Massanutten Lutherans were able to organize on a more secure footing. The earliest indication of a formal Lutheran organization is a deed from 1765 from Pastor Johannes Schwarbach to Peter Panter and Jacob Schafer, who were apparently trustees of the Lutheran Church. The land was specifically deeded for the use of a "congregation". How Rev. Schwarbach came to control the land is unclear.

A church building was formally constructed on the site shortly thereafter. No information has come to light as to the appearance or materials of this structure. It may be assumed that it was log structure. Like many churches in the Shenandoah Valley it was a union church shared by a German Reformed and Lutheran congregations. The church appears to have been known interchangeably during this period as Gomer's (also spelled Comer, or Comber in the 1765 deed) after the family that owned the adjoining farm, or Hawksbill (originally Hoxbiehl) after nearby Hawksbill Creek.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Mount Calvary Lutheran Church
Page County, Virginia

Section 8 Page 4

The predominance of German immigrants and the relative isolation of Page County allowed German culture to thrive in the area. German was the first language and in many cases the only language of the community until the early nineteenth century. This cultural environment also allowed the retention of traditional German crafts including painted interiors, painted furniture, and fraktur. In addition, German was the language of worship and music in the community until the mid-nineteenth century. At Mount Calvary, the records of the congregation were kept in German until the 1860s. The oldest English-language hymnals discovered in the sanctuary bear the date 1860.

Starting in the late eighteenth century pastors from Woodstock and New Market began to serve the Hawksbill Lutherans. Notable among these were Peter Muhlenberg and members of the Henkel family. The closer proximity of these pastors implies that worship was held on a more regular basis during this era.

In the early nineteenth century a number of notable changes occurred in the Hawksbill Lutheran community. By 1817 the congregation had named itself Mount Calvary, an appropriate reference to its setting. By 1822 the property had come into the exclusive use of the Lutherans. It was at this time that the congregation constructed a second church building on the site. After being affiliated for much of its history with the Pennsylvania Ministerium, the short-lived Virginia District of the Pennsylvania Ministerium, and the North Carolina Synod, the congregation joined the Virginia District of the Tennessee Synod in 1820. The meeting of the Virginia District was held at Mount Calvary in May, 1860. The congregation did not become a part of the Virginia Synod until 1918.

Over the course of the nineteenth century the Hawksbill settlement slowly started to prosper. Large barns and farmhouses started to appear across Page Valley. The town of Luray was established in 1812, and it became the seat of newly created Page County in 1831. The descendants of the Massanutten settlers over time became successful farmers. The construction of a number of substantial farm complexes in the middle and later decades of the century reflected this. By the early nineteenth century iron foundries and the related charcoal industries also became an important part of the local economy. The Shenandoah River and later the Sperryville Turnpike provided a means of transporting the commodities of the area to market. During this period of prosperity, the congregation constructed the present building. The third church building on the site was completed in 1848.

Page County continued to grow and prosper after the Civil War. In 1885 the Shenandoah Valley railroad came to the community, providing growth to the town of Luray and a ready market to the farmers of the community. During this era Mount Calvary Church launched an expansion program under the direction of Rev. J.N. Stirewalt.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Mount Calvary Lutheran Church
Page County, Virginia

Section 8 Page 5

Stirewalt was apparently the first full-time pastor in the history of the congregation. This expansion movement reflected the growth of Mount Calvary (which had been the only Lutheran church in the area) and the need for churches that would better serve the widespread Page Valley Lutherans. Starting with Morning Star on Dry Run near Stony Man in 1873, the new churches included: St. Mark's in Luray (1875), Grace in Ida (1878), St. James north of Luray (1882), and Beth Eden east of Luray (1896). Rev. Stirewalt served most of these churches until his death in 1906. Over time most became large successful congregations.

The group of congregations (less St. James, and St. Mark's) would become known as Stony Man Parish in deference to the general neighborhood. Stony Man Parish built a large parsonage in Luray in 1911. The success of the daughter congregations would prove to be the end of Mount Calvary as an active congregation. After the size of the congregation dwindled, regular services ceased to be held in 1959. Since that time the use of the building has been restricted to occasional homecoming services. At the bequest of the Trust of Mr. Claude E. Dofflemeyer of Luray, an effort was initiated to nominate the building to the National Register of Historic Places and the Virginia Landmarks Register. The owners of the buildings, the Mount Calvary Lutheran Trustees, are considering how to best use the building.

The building is a virtual time capsule that appears almost exactly as it did when it opened. Mount Calvary Church is an important landmark of German architecture in Page County. The original blue paint scheme represents an important cultural tradition of painting furniture and interiors. The building is an important example of a meetinghouse floor plan successfully adapted to the needs of liturgical worship. The original blue and later mahogany finishes are important intact interior finishes, as well as an example of local craft practices. The blue walls and pews reflect a tradition of painted furniture and interiors practiced in the Page County German community in the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. Nearby Grace Lutheran Church of 1835 is documented as having a brightly-colored paint scheme of pink and green woodwork. The building interior, with its use of the Tuscan order, exhibits a high degree of architectural craftsmanship and finish. The building came during an era of impressive brick construction in Page County that included: large farm complexes, Luray townhouses, and churches. This architectural era followed construction of the Page County Courthouse, an important architectural model completed in 1831.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Mount Calvary Lutheran Church
Page County, Virginia

Section 9 Page 6

Bibliography

Bauserman, Gary. "The History of Page County" in Page County Bicentennial Commission. Page the County of Plenty. Luray: 1976.

"Copy of the Original Deed of Mt. Calvary Lutheran Church, Page Co. Va."
Transcription of original 1765 deed in the possession of Stony Man Lutheran Parish, Luray, Virginia.

Dovell I.R. "The History of the Town of Luray" in Page County Bicentennial Commission. Page the County of Plenty. Luray: 1976.

Eisenberg, William Edward. The Lutheran Church in Virginia 1717-1962 Including an Account of the Church in East Tennessee Roanoke: The Trustees of the Virginia Synod, Lutheran Church in America, 1967.

Casell, C.W. ; Finck, W.J.; and Henkel; Elon. History of the Lutheran Church in Virginia and East Tennessee. Strasburg: Shenandoah Publishing House, 1930.

Henkel, Socrates. The History of the Evangelical Lutheran Church Tennessee Synod. New Market: Henkel Press, 1890.

Finck; Rev. William J. Translator. "Early Records of Mount Calvary Lutheran Church, Page County, Virginia."
Transcription in the possession of Stony Man Lutheran Parish, Luray, Virginia.

Morgan C.I. "Mount Calvary and Old Churches" Newspaper clipping c. 1910 in the possession of Stony Man Lutheran Parish, Luray, Virginia.

Lambert, Darwin. The Undying Past of Shenandoah National Park. Boulder Colorado: Robinson Rinehart, 1989.

Mount Calvary History Committee (Bob Chrisman, Sherry Erb, Mary Jane Good, Jean Moyer, Ken Sours, Ruth Sptiler, and Gaylon Waters), Stony Man Lutheran Parish, Interview by Tyler Potterfield, February 6, 1997, Beth Eden Lutheran Church.

Potterfield, Tyler. Inspection of Mount Calvary Lutheran Church with Mr. Donald Moyer, April 3, 1997.

Waters, Gaylon. Letter to Mount Calvary History Committee, February 8, 1997.

Wust, Klaus. The Virginia Germans. Charlottesville: The University Press of Virginia, 1969.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Mount Calvary Lutheran Church
Page County, Virginia

Section 10 Page 7

Geographical Data

Verbal Boundary Description:

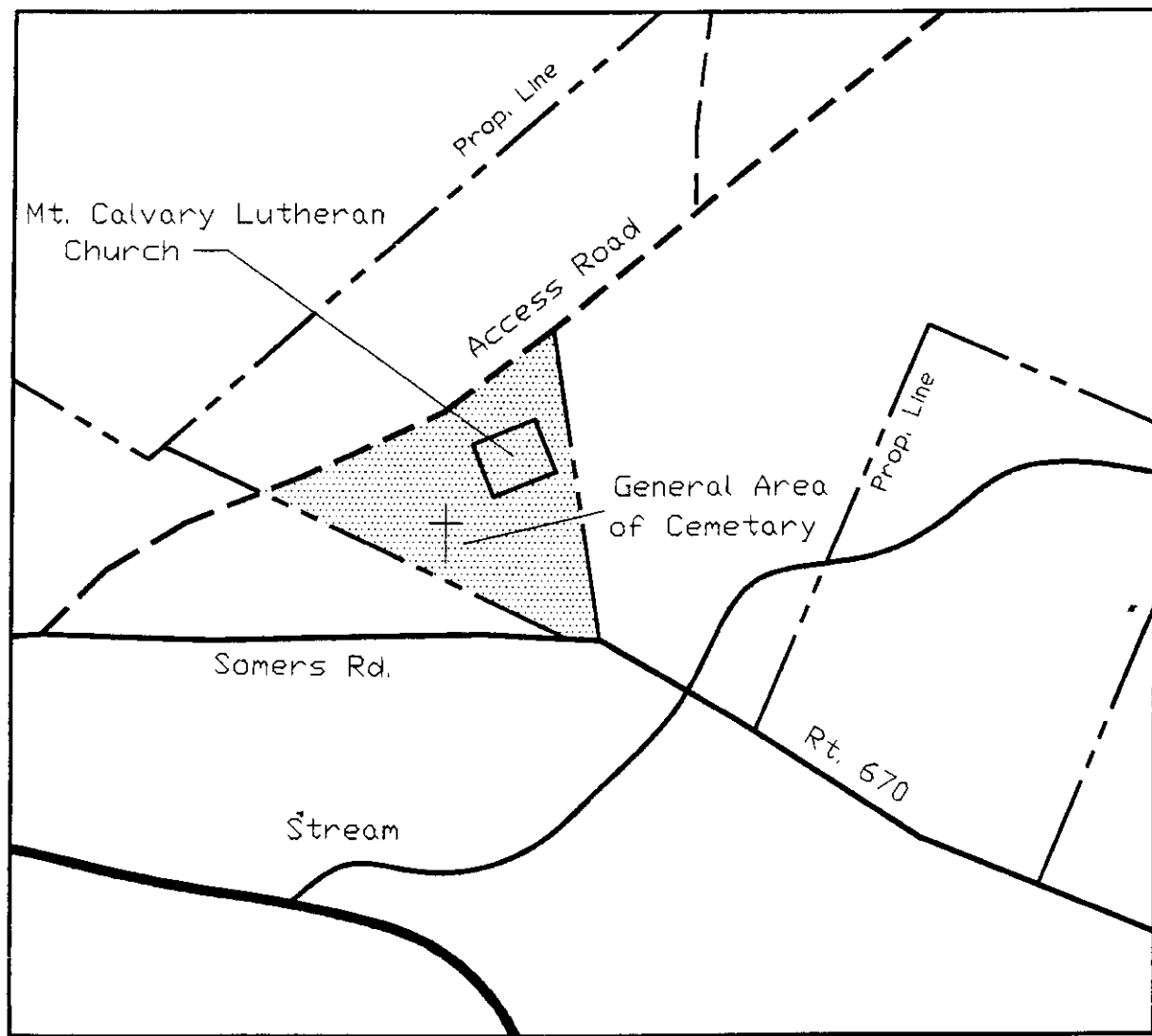
The following are the legal descriptions of record for the property. The first is the original three acres granted to the Church in 1765 and the other is a small addition of 1850. The descriptions include the original spelling, punctuation, abbreviations, and capitalization. The 1765 deed is recorded on Page 197 of Page County Deed Book H in the Page County Courthouse in Luray, Virginia. The 1850 description is taken from a copy in the possession of Stony Man Lutheran Parish in Luray, Virginia.

1765: "All that tract of land scituate in sd County [Frederick] on a branch of the Hawksbill and bounded as followeth Vix Beginning at a black oaks and hickery on the North side of a branch called Beicker branch corner to Phillip Summer runneth thence north seven poles to a black oak and spanish oak & thence north west seventeen poles to two pines in adam combers line thence Southwest Eleven poles to sd Combers line to Michael Porucker thence to the beginning. Containing three acres be the same more or less..... "

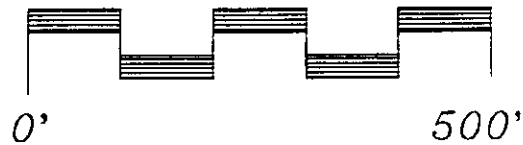
1850: "The lot hereby conveyed is bounded as follows Xiz; Beginning at or between two pines corner to the old Glebe,, and extending thence with a sd line S 48 E 23 poles to a stake corner to sd church land thence N 28 E 23 poles to a stake corner to sd church land thence N 2-1/2 w 6 poles to two small pines by a road thence N 37 W 13.8 poles to a large pine and thence S 80 W 8.6 Poles to the beginning, continuing two rods and twenty poles...."

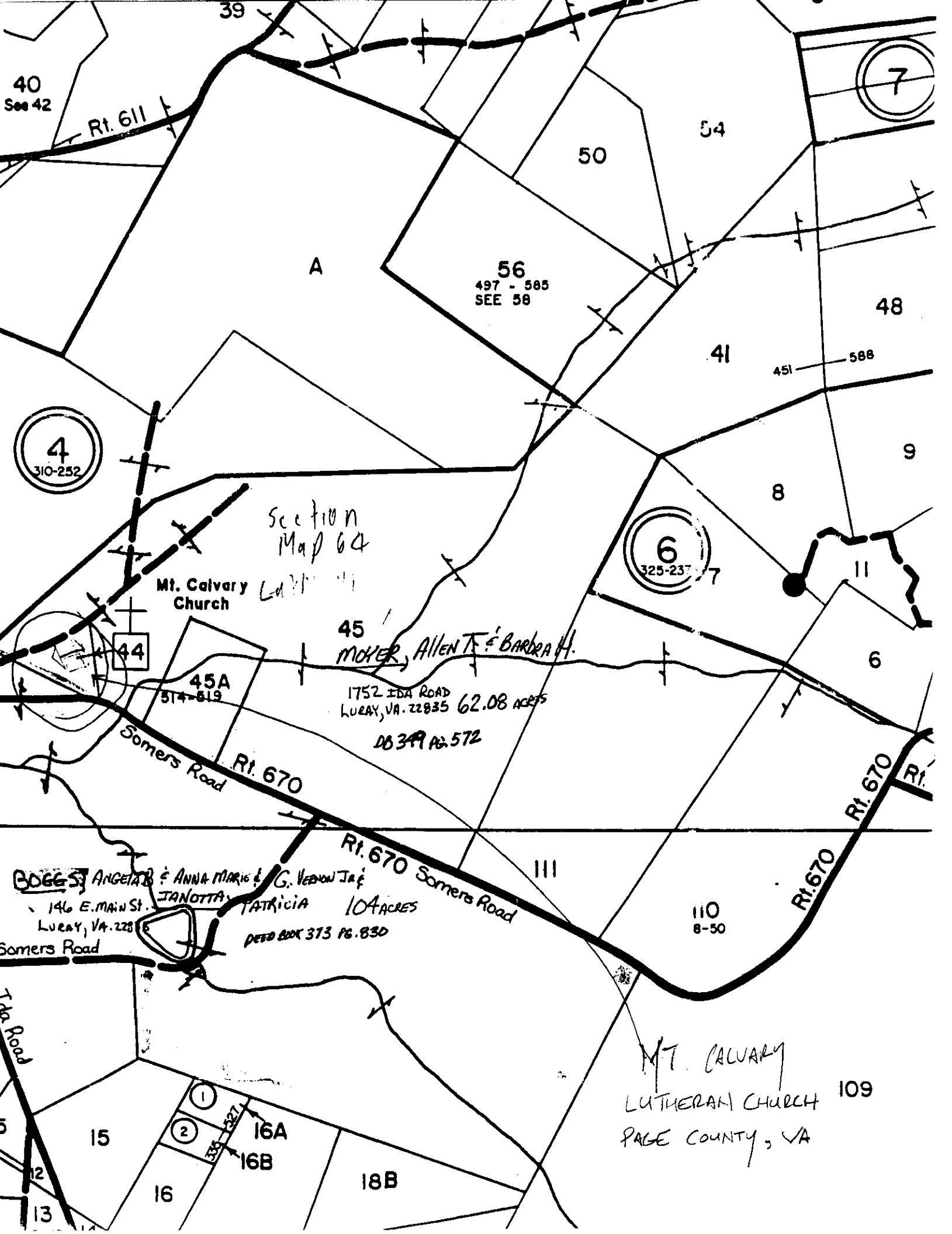
Boundary Justification:

The boundaries include the original property deeded to the congregation in 1765 and slightly expanded in 1850. The boundaries proposed include the intact extent of the property during its period of significance. There have been no intrusions or modifications to the property that would warrant a reduction in size.



PROPERTY LOCATED ON LURAY, VA. QUADRANGLE MAP
 1965, PHOTOREVISED 1987
 38D 37' 30" N.
 78D 27' 25" W.





40
See 42

Rt. 611

4
310-252

Section
Map 64

Mt. Calvary
Church

44

45A
514-519

45
MOYER, ALLEN T. & BARBARA H.

1752 IDA ROAD
LURAY, VA. 22835 62.08 ACRES

DB 349 PG. 572

Somers Road

Rt. 670

Rt. 670 Somers Road

BOGGS, ANGELA B. & ANNA MARIE & G. VERNON JR. & JANOTTA

146 E. MAIN ST.
LURAY, VA. 22835

PATRICIA

104 ACRES

DEED BOOK 373 PG. 830

Somers Road

Ida Road

MT. CALVARY
LUTHERAN CHURCH
PAGE COUNTY, VA

109

1

2

16A

16B

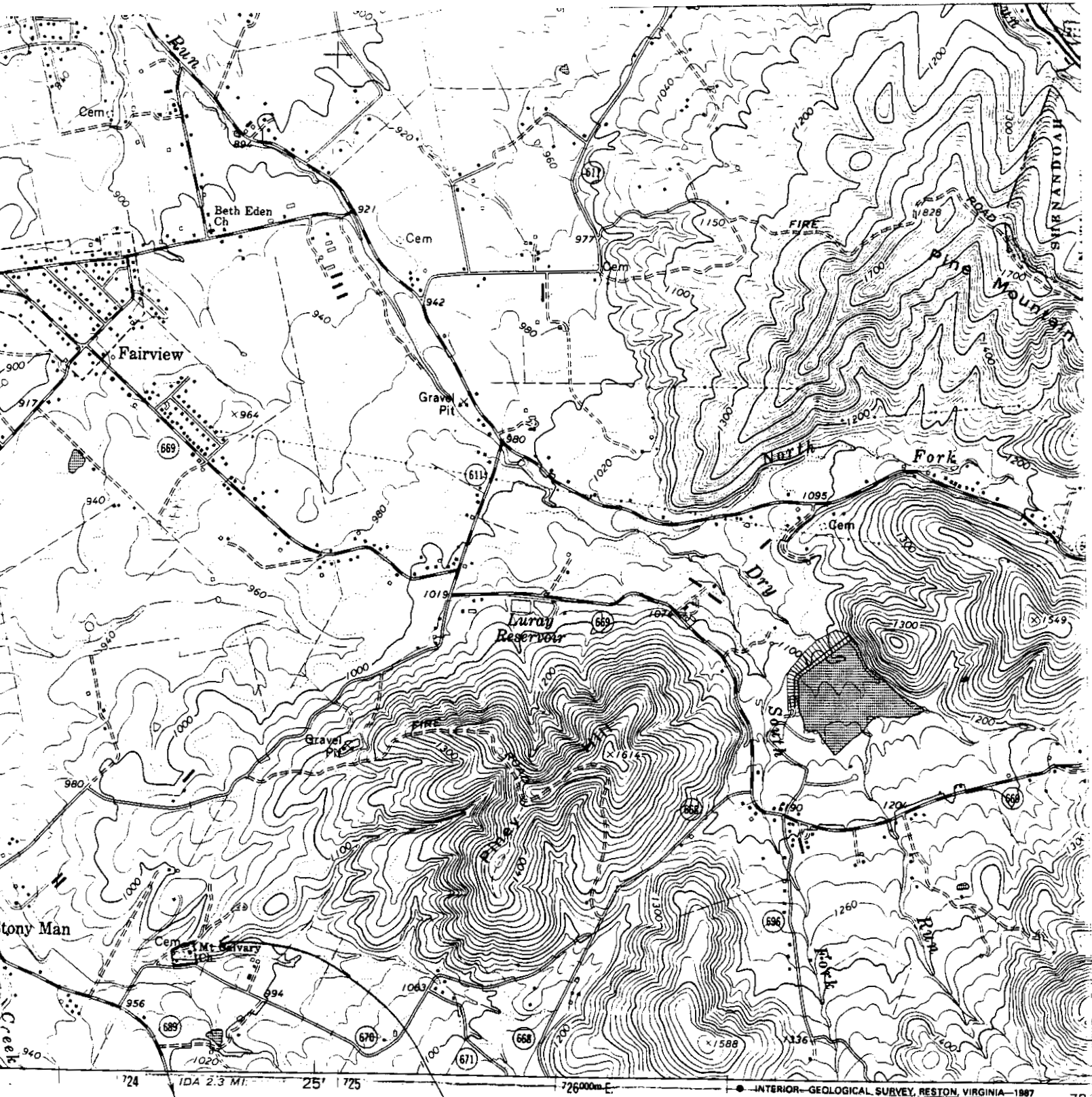
15

16

18B

12

13

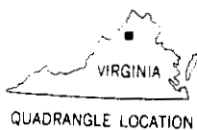


MOUNT CALVARY LUTHERAN CHURCH PAGE COUNTY, VIRGINIA

UTM REF. 17/724300 / 4278600

ROAD CLASSIFICATION

Heavy-duty ——— Light-duty ———
Medium-duty ——— Unimproved dirt - - - - -
U. S. Route State Route



QUADRANGLE LOCATION

Revisions shown in purple and woodland compiled in cooperation with commonwealth of Virginia agencies from aerial photographs taken 1984 and other sources. This information not field checked. Map edited 1987

LURAY, VA.
38078-F4-TF-024

1965
PHOTOREVISED 1987
DMA 5361 III NW-SERIES V834

ACCURACY STANDARDS
O 80225 OR RESTON, VIRGINIA 22092,
ARLINGTON, VIRGINIA 22203
IS AVAILABLE ON REQUEST